



24-Month STEM OPT Extension

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Introduction to STEM Optional Practical Training (OPT)



STEM Optional Practical Training (OPT)

Extension

A 24-month extension of post-completion OPT authorized by USCIS for certain individuals in F-1 status who receive science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) degrees listed on the [STEM Eligible CIP Codes](#) list



Qualifying STEM Degree

- Must be based on STEM-qualifying Bachelor's, Master's, or Ph.D. degree from an accredited SEVP-certified school
- The CIP code for the degree's major field of study must appear on the [STEM Designated Program List](#).
- **Note:** students still working towards a thesis or dissertation requirement may apply for STEM OPT
 - Best practice is to have your degree completed
 - This exception is not available if the STEM OPT extension is based on a *previous* degree where the thesis or dissertation is not completed



STEM OPT based on a previously obtained qualifying STEM degree

A 24-month STEM OPT extension can be based either on:

- The degree your current post-completion OPT degree is based on, or
- A previously obtained STEM degree from an accredited U.S. institution, even if was not earned at CU Boulder.

Requirements for applying based on a *previous* STEM Degree at the time CU Boulder ISSS makes the recommendation:

- The degree must have been conferred by an accredited, SEVP-certified U.S. institution *prior* to the current degree that serves as the basis for post-completion OPT
- The degree's major field of study must be on the current [STEM Designated Degree Program List](#)
- The degree must have been conferred within the past 10 years



Additional Eligibility Requirements

- ✓ Be in an approved authorized period of post-completion OPT
 - ✓ USCIS must receive your STEM OPT application prior to your post-completion OPT end date
- ✓ Maintained lawful F-1 status during the post-completion OPT period.
 - ✓ Report all post-completion OPT employment promptly
 - ✓ Do not accrue more than 90 days of unemployment
- ✓ Have a Qualifying job
 - ✓ Job must be paid, for at least 20 hours a week at each STEM employer
 - ✓ Must relate to the STEM major field of study
- ✓ Have a qualifying STEM employer
 - ✓ Employer must be enrolled in [E-Verify](#) and have an IRS Employer Identification Number (EIN)
 - ✓ There must be a “bona fide employer-employee” relationship
 - ✓ Student may not be self-employed
- ✓ Have a completed Form I-983 training plan
 - ✓ Student and employer must complete a Form I-983 Training Plan
 - ✓ Student must submit completed I-983 to their DSO (ISSS advisor) before the DSO recommends STEM OPT in SEVIS



STEM OPT Qualifying Job Requirements

The regulations require any job undertaken during a 24-month STEM OPT extension meet the following conditions:

- The employer is enrolled in [E-Verify](#)
- The job is directly related to your qualifying STEM degree
- The job assists you in reaching your training goals as outlined in Form I-983
 - The job is more than just a position— your employer must provide structured training as outlined on Form I-983
- The employer that signs your Form I-983 must be the same entity that provides the practical training experience
- The position must be a paid position with compensation and conditions comparable to U.S. workers
- Require at least 20 hours per week, excluding approved leave
- A bona fide employer-employee relationship must exist



Bona Fide Employer-Employee Relationship

- Students cannot qualify for STEM OPT extensions unless they will be bona fide employees of the employer signing the I-983 Training Plan
- The employer that signs the I-983 Training Plan must be the same entity that employs the student and provides the practical training experience
- Certain types of employment may not demonstrate a bona fide employer-employee relationship, such as:
 - multiple employers
 - self-employment/sole proprietorships
 - employment through “temp” agencies
 - employment through consulting firm arrangements that provide labor for hire,
- Please review the STEM OPT Employer Requirements and Responsibilities on [this USCIS webpage](#) to learn more.



STEM OPT start date

The STEM OPT *authorization* start date must be the date immediately after your post-completion OPT end date.

- Example:
 - Post-completion OPT end date is June 1.
 - STEM OPT authorization start date will be June 2.

If your STEM OPT *employment* start date is after your STEM OPT *authorization* start date, then you will accrue unemployment days.

- Example:
 - STEM OPT authorization start date is June 2.
 - STEM OPT employment start date is July 2.
 - You will accrue 30 unemployment days for the days between June 2 and July 2.





Applying for STEM OPT



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Application Timeline

Your STEM OPT application must be received by USCIS:

- No earlier than 90 days prior to your current post-completion OPT EAD expiration date;
 - No later than your current post-completion OPT EAD end date; *and*
 - Within 60 days of the “School Attestation” signature date on page 1 of the STEM OPT I-20
-
- Note: It can take several days for USCIS to receipt an application, so ISSS recommends submitting your application at least 3 business days before your OPT end date and within 57 days from the date ISSS issued your STEM OPT recommendation I-20
 - You **MUST** submit your application to USCIS while you are **inside** of the United States.



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Step 1: Complete the I-983 Training Plan

Before ISSS can recommend the 24-month STEM OPT extension you must:

- Complete the [I-983 Training Plan for STEM OPT Students](#) with your employer
 - Signatures for the I-983 can be
 - Wet signature (ink)
 - Electronic signature using software programs or applications, or
 - An electronically reproduced copy of a signature.

The [Form I-983](#):

- Clearly articulates the STEM OPT student's learning objectives
- Affirms the employer's commitment to helping the student achieve those objectives.

The Form I-983 is **not** submitted to USCIS with the STEM OPT application. ISSS uploads it to your SEVIS record when recommending STEM OPT in SEVIS.

Form I-983 Training Plan

Carefully review the form I-983 instructions on the [ISSS STEM OPT webpage](#) and the [Department of Homeland Security's website](#).

If Form I-983 has edits needed, it will slow down ISSS's processing time. Common mistakes to be aware of:

Section 1:

- **DSO Name and Contact Information:** Enter the name of an ISSS Advisor, their email address, phone number, and the following address: 2249 Willard Loop Drive Boulder, CO 80309. You may handwrite this information neatly in black ink.
- **Qualifying Major and Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) Code:** Be sure to enter both found on your form I-20. Example: 11.0701 - Computer Science.
- **Based on Prior Degree** – Check NO if using the same degree for your current Post-Completion OPT.
- **Employment Authorization Number:** Enter the number found on your Employment Authorization Document (EAD card) underneath “USCIS#”



Form I-983 Training Plan Continued

Section 3:

- **Start Date of Employment:** Enter the date when you will begin the *STEM OPT training* with the employer
 - If you previously worked for this employer under post-completion OPT, do **not** use that earlier date—this must be your **STEM OPT start date**.

Section 5:

- **Site address:** Physical address where you will be working while on the STEM OPT Extension.
 - If you work remotely **full-time**, list your remote work address. If you work from your home address, enter “Home residence” as the site name.
 - If you work in a hybrid arrangement (both at the employer’s worksite and remotely), list the employer’s physical worksite address in Section 5 of the Form I-983.
- In this section your employer must answer each question fully, and provide *detailed* information regarding your role, goals and objectives, employer oversight, and measures and assessment.



Form I-983 Training Plan Continued

Page 5, Evaluations:

When you submit your *STEM OPT Extension I-20 Request* to ISSS, page 5 of your I-983 should be left blank.

- This page will be used for your 12-month and 24-month (or final) evaluations.
- It will be completed by you and your employer:
 - one year into your period of STEM OPT ('evaluation on student progress'), and
 - at the end of any of your STEM OPT employment ('final evaluation on student progress').



Step 2: STEM OPT Extension I-20 Request eform

2. Complete the ***STEM OPT Extension I-20 Request*** eform, available in the [MyISSS Portal](#), under Training/Employment-Related Forms.

You must attach the following to the eform:

- completed and signed Form I-983 Training Plan
- most recent EAD card; and
- documentation of the completion of your STEM degree coursework.
 - If you have completed the degree, attach a copy of your diploma and/or a copy of your final transcript indicating the degree and major.
 - If you have only completed the coursework for the degree, attach a signed letter on letterhead from your academic department indicating the degree's major, when the coursework was completed, and that the degree is still in progress.

You must first receive the I-20 recommending STEM OPT from ISSS before submitting your I-765 to USCIS.

While ISSS is reviewing STEM OPT Extension I-20 Request eform

ISSS will contact you if any questions arise or if edits are needed

- To avoid common mistakes and delays, **carefully review the I-983 instructions on the [ISSS STEM OPT webpage](#) and the [Department of Homeland Security's website](#)** before submitting the e-form

ISSS will:

- **Recommend** your STEM OPT Extension in SEVIS and upload your completed Form I-983.
- **Issue a signed I-20** recommending STEM OPT. You must **sign this I-20 by hand** and include a copy in your USCIS application.

Note: ISSS only **recommends** the 24-month STEM OPT Extension; the final approval is determined by USCIS.



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What happens if I apply to USCIS first without an ISSS OPT STEM Extension recommendation I-20?

The STEM OPT application will be **denied**, and you will not receive a refund for the filing fee



Submitting Your STEM OPT Application



Step 3: Submit Form I-765 to USCIS

The USCIS Form I-765 is used to request employment authorization and an Employment Authorization Document (EAD).

Filing electronically

Create or log in to your USCIS online account at myaccount.uscis.gov

Within your USCIS account, you will be able to:

- Complete the online [Form I-765](#).
- Upload required evidence.
- Pay the [I-765 filing fee](#).

Please note: you must have your STEM OPT Recommendation I-20 from ISSS to upload as part of your application



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What evidence do I need to submit to USCIS for my online STEM OPT application?

| Evidence (as listed in online filing system) | Example | Notes |
|---|---|--|
| 2 x 2 photo of you | Passport Photo | See " Photo Requirements " <u>U.S. Department of State photo requirements</u> . DOS also has a <u>photo check tool</u> that you can use to check the photo ahead of time. |
| Form I-94 | Entry I-94 Or Change of Status I-797 Approval | Download your most recent I-94 here: <u>https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/</u> |
| Employment Authorization Document | Post-completion OPT EAD Card | |
| Form I-20 | Newest I-20 with STEM OPT recommendation | This is only referring to the recommending I-20, not to prior I-20s. |
| College degree | Diploma and / or transcripts showing degree conferral | |
| Institution accreditation | Proof of Accreditation (screenshot from school or accreditor's website) | Only required if you are filing STEM OPT based on a prior degree (i.e. not the OPT degree). |



Timely Filing Consideration!

- ISSS has observed that I-765 applications submitted online are often received the day after submission.
- To be safe, ISSS recommends submitting your I-765 no later than 57 days after receiving your recommending I-20 from ISSS.
- USCIS is not open on weekends or federal holidays. Be mindful when submitting the I-765 close to the deadline as it may not be received until after a weekend or holiday

Pay.gov Payment Confirmation: USCIS I-765

1 me age

ELISdonotreply@uscis.dhs.gov <ELISdonotreply@uscis.dhs.gov>
To: [REDACTED]

Tue, Apr 11, 2023 at 9:17 PM

Your payment ha been ubmited to Pay gov and the detail are below If you have que tion about thi notification or need technical support, please contact us online at <https://egov.uscis.gov/cris/contactus> and reference the receipt number(s) shown below.

Application Name USCIS I 765

Pay.Gov Tracking ID: [REDACTED]

Agency Tracking ID: [REDACTED]

Transaction Type: Credit Card

Tran action Amount \$410 00

Payment Date: Apr 12, 2023

Transaction Date: Apr 12, 2023 03:17:50 AM

Your payment was applied to the following case(s):
[REDACTED]



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Check USCIS Processing Times

- Go to
<https://egov.uscis.gov/processing-times/>
- Select:
 - Form = I-765 Application for Employment Authorization
 - Form Category = Based on a request by a qualified F-1 academic student [(c)(3)]
 - Field Office or Service Center = Service Center Operations (SCOPS)

Form *
I-765 | Application for Employment Authorization

Form Category *
Based on a request by a qualified F-1 academic student [(c)(3)]

Field Office or Service Center *
Service Center Operations (SCOPS)

Get processing time

Processing time for Application for Employment Authorization (I-765) at Service Center Operations (SCOPS)

80% of cases are completed within
4.5
Months



Premium Processing Option for e-filed I-765s!

- Online filing of Form I-907, Request for Premium Processing Service
- Guarantees adjudicative action within 30 business days of receipt
 - Does not include time for printing and mailing the EAD
 - If your application requires additional security clearance, the review can take more than 30 business days
- Premium Processing fee is in addition to the I-765 filing fee
 - Fees are subject to change
- Can be requested when first submitting the I-765 or can be added to a pending application



Case Was Changed To A Premium Processing Case

We changed your case, Receipt Number IOE9605064368, from a standard case to a premium-processing case. The premium-processing clock started on April 14, 2023.

Your premium-processing receipt notice contains contact information for direct inquiries on your case. Please follow the instructions in the notice. If you move, contact the premium-processing unit directly to update your address.



While your STEM OPT Application is Pending



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Automatic 180-Day Extension

You may continue to work on your expired post-completion OPT EAD along with your STEM OPT Receipt Notice for up to 180 days while your STEM OPT petition is pending if you meet the following conditions:

- You are currently in a period of post-completion OPT.
- You properly and in a timely manner filed your application for the 24-month STEM OPT Extension with USCIS.

*Receipt Notice must show a receipt date that is *prior* to your current post-completion OPT EAD end date.

You can learn more about the 180-extension on the [USCIS website](#).



If You Move and your I-765 is Pending

Change your address through your USCIS online account immediately and update your address in the SEVP portal

- ISSS also strongly recommends that you:
 - Sign up for mail forwarding with U.S. Postal Service.
 - Enroll in USPS Informed Delivery service.
 - Add a name label to your physical mailbox.



Request for Evidence (RFE) for Photo Submission

- USCIS has recently been issuing RFE notices requiring I-765 applicants to visit a USCIS Application Support Center (ASC) to have digital photos taken
- If you receive an RFE, follow the instructions.
- There is no way to complete the ACS photo requirement prior to submitting your OPT application.
- There is no need to notify ISSS if you receive an RFE solely for the ASC photo requirement. However, if you receive an RFE requesting any additional evidence beyond the photo, please contact ISSS.



While you Wait

Pay attention to your receipt notice, mail, and notifications from USCIS

- Contact ISSS if your OPT application is rejected, denied, or if you receive a Request for Evidence (RFE).
- Use [USCIS online tools](#) or call the National Customer Service Number (800-375-5283) to submit an online case inquiry or service request.
- Check your [case status](#) online.



USCIS Case Inquiries & Status Requests

In addition to the National Customer Service Center phone line,
800-375-5283, USCIS offers several online tools.

- Check your case status online.
- Get automatic updates about your case.
- Get a tracking number and register for Informed Delivery through USPS to get previews of the mail in transit.

Case Inquiry

| | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |
| Case outside normal processing time <small>Think a case is taking longer than expected?</small> | Did not receive notice by mail <small>Think a notice is lost or missing?</small> | Did not receive card by mail <small>Think a card is lost or missing?</small> | Did not receive document by mail <small>Think a document is lost or missing?</small> |

Service Request

| | |
|--|--|
|  |  |
| Appointment Accommodations <small>Request accommodations for an interview appointment</small> | Typographic Error <small>Make typographic corrections for a case</small> |



Case Inquiry Date

Check your USCIS case inquiry date if your I-765 is pending beyond USCIS's posted processing time and no Request for Evidence has been issued:

- After checking the USCIS processing time for I-765s for students in F-1 status, you can enter your receipt notice date to get your inquiry date
- Learn more about the Case Inquiry Date

On or after your inquiry date you can send USCIS questions about your case by submitting a Service Request online.

When can I ask about my case?

Many routine factors affect how quickly a case may be processed. To facilitate resolution of these factors, we only allow questions for certain cases.

[Learn more about the Case Inquiry Date](#).

Enter your receipt date below to find out if you can contact us with questions.

When is your receipt date?

mm / dd / yyyy 

Get Inquiry Date



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EAD: Employment Authorization Document

STEM OPT work authorization is granted in the form of an Employment Authorization Document (EAD).

Dates of employment authorization:
You CANNOT work outside of these
dates.





STEM OPT Reporting Requirements

STEM OPT Reporting Requirements

This Study in the States [STEM OPT Reporting Requirements handout](#) is helpful for students and employers to understand their reporting requirements.

General Reporting: You must report any changes to your legal name, address, employer, and employment within 10 days of the change.

- **Changes in address, or phone number**
 - Use the SEVP Portal to make these updates.
 - Review the [SEVP Help Hub](#) for additional resources (e.g., user guide, instructional videos)
- **Changes in legal name, citizenship, and immigration status**
 - Submit the *Biographical or Contact Info Update* e-form to report (General Forms in [MyISSS portal](#))
- **Employment Changes (e.g., new job, ending employment, period of unemployment, change of status, ect)**
 - Submit the *STEM OPT Employment Info Update* e-form (Training & Employment-Related Forms in [MyISSS portal](#))



STEM OPT Reporting Requirements Continued

Validation Reporting

- Every six months you must complete the *STEM OPT Validation Reporting* eform (available in [MyISSS portal](#)) to confirm your information in SEVIS is accurate
- ISSS will email you when it is time to submit the *STEM OPT Validation Reporting* e-form. Please wait for this reminder before submitting the form.

12 and 24- Month Validation Reporting: Self-Evaluations

- As part of the 12 and 24-month validation reports, you must complete and submit to ISSS an annual self-evaluation on page 5 of the I-983 describing the progress of the training experience
 - Progress evaluation: 12 months after the STEM OPT start date
 - Final Evaluation: Due within 10 days following the end of STEM OPT employment including when the 24-month STEM period ends



Employer Reporting Requirements

- Evaluation of Student Progress
 - The STEM OPT employer must review the student's annual self-evaluation and sign it to attest to its accuracy.
- Material Changes to an Existing Form I-983
 - Employers must collaborate with the STEM OPT student to report any material changes to Form I-983 to ISSS at CU Boulder
 - The STEM OPT student must submit the **STEM OPT Employment Info Update** eform (available in the MyISSS Portal)
- Loss of Employment
 - Both the employer and student must notify ISSS at CU Boulder if the student's employment is terminated for any reason before the end of the STEM period.
 - The employer must report this to ISSS no later than five business days after the student's employment terminates
 - Send an email to ISSS with details of the termination



Changing Employers – STEM application is pending

1. Submit a New Form I-983

- Complete the *STEM OPT Employment Info Update* eform (available in the [MyISSS Portal](#)) to submit your new I-983 to ISSS within 10-days of starting with your new employment

2. Wait for Updated I-20

- Within 2-5 business days, ISSS will issue you an updated I-20 with the new employer information on page 2.
- Print and sign the I-20

3. Upload the Updated I-20 To USCIS

- log in to the [myaccount.uscis.gov](#) account
- upload the I-20 to *Unsolicited Evidence* under the documents tab

If you are already within your STEM OPT period (after your Post-Completion OPT end date):

4. Submit the Form I-983 final evaluation for your previous employer.

- Your employer is required to report the termination of your employment to ISSS within 5 business days. They should send [ISSS](#) an email.
- The final evaluation (found on the bottom of page 5 of your I-983) must be completed by you and signed by your supervisor.
- When completing the *STEM OPT Employment Info Update*, select you are reporting “The end of my previously reported STEM OPT employment and a new STEM OPT job”



Changing Employers – STEM application approved

1. Report the End of your Current Employment

- Send [ISSS](#) an email.
- Your current employer is also required to report the termination of your employment to ISSS within 5 business days. They should send [ISSS](#) an email.

2. Complete your Form I-983 final evaluation

- Fill out page 5 of Form I-983 (Final evaluation section on the bottom of the page only)
- You do not have to complete a brand-new Form I-983 for the evaluation, just the final evaluation found on page 5.

3. Submit the *STEM OPT Employment Info Update* e-form

- Go to your [MyISSS portal](#) under Training & Employment-Related Forms
- Upload your completed Form I-983 final evaluation signed by you and your supervisor.

4. Report your new employment, if applicable

- When completing the *STEM OPT Employment Info Update*, select you are reporting “The end of my previously reported STEM OPT employment and a new STEM OPT job”
- Report your new employer details and upload the **new** completed and signed Form I-983 Training Plan for.



Unemployment During STEM OPT

While on the 24-month STEM OPT extension, you are allowed an additional 60 days of unemployment, in addition to any unused 90 unemployment days from your period of post-completion OPT.

This brings the total maximum allowed unemployment time to 150 days throughout the entire period of post-completion OPT and STEM OPT extension combined

- Example: If you finish your Post-Completion OPT with 40 days of unemployment time accrued (leaving 50 days remaining), then you would have 110 days of unemployment remaining during your period of STEM OPT.



U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Site Visits

Routine site visits for randomly selected STEM OPT participants are permitted under the STEM OPT program.

- You can read more about these visits on the [Study in the States website](#).

To help prepare, please be aware of the following:

- **Consistency of information:** Make sure that all information reported on your Form I-983 and in the SEVP Portal is accurate, consistent, and clearly aligned with your job responsibilities.
- **Work location:** Ensure your worksite location in the SEVP Portal is accurate.
 - If your worksite has changed, submit the *STEM OPT Employment Info Update* e-form to report your new worksite as a material change
- **EAD card:** Always carry your valid OPT STEM Extension EAD card (work permit) with you.
- **Be prepared for questions and documentation requests.** During a site visit, the government official may ask about your employment (e.g., job duties and responsibilities, work hours, compensation, and how your degree relates to your current position). You may also need to present documentation, including:
 - School transcripts
 - Form I-983 Training Plan
 - Employee ID badge
 - Job offer letter
 - Resume
 - Recent pay stubs and/or W-2 form



Documentation to Keep

Suggested Documentation for STEM OPT: you may be asked to provide the following records during or after your STEM OPT authorization:

- Proof that your training is directly related to your major field of study.
- Copies of offer letters or contracts with all STEM OPT employers, including start/ end dates, pay rate, and weekly work hours.
- Job descriptions including job title, duties, location, and supervisor's contact information.
- Copies of pay stubs, bank statements showing direct deposits from your employer(s), and associated W-2 tax forms.



Cap-Gap Extension I-20

Students with a pending or approved cap-subject H-1B petition may remain in F-1 status during the “cap-gap” period – the time between the end of their OPT or F-1 status and the start of their H-1B status.

Cap-Gap Eligibility Requirements:

- a cap-subject H-1B petition was filed as a change of status with USCIS; and
- USCIS receives the petition before the OPT/ STEM OPT end date or within the 60-day grace period; and
- The requested H-1B start date is April 1 of the fiscal year or earlier

The F-1 status will be extended through the day before the approved H-1B start date. *Note:* If the H-1B was filed during the 60-day grace period, the F-1 status is extended but not the work authorization.

The cap-gap extension terminates automatically if the H-1B petition is denied, withdrawn, or rejected.

- To request a Cap-Gap I-20, sign in to [MyISSS](#) and complete the **Cap-Gap I-20 Request** under *Training/Employment-Related Forms*.



60-Day Grace Period After STEM OPT Completion

After completing your STEM OPT, you have a 60-day grace period if you maintained your F-1 status and did not exceed your allotted unemployment days.

- You **cannot** work or re-enter the U.S. in F-1 status during this grace period.
- Plan to leave the U.S. on or before the end of your 60-day grace period.
- You may request a SEVIS transfer to another U.S institution if admitted and the new program starts within 5 months.
- You can also apply for a [change of status](#) during this grace period.



Beginning a New Degree Program or Completing a SEVIS Transfer While on STEM OPT

- STEM OPT work authorization is **terminated** when your SEVIS record is transferred to a new school and/or you begin a program at another educational level.
- If you choose to enroll in a course of study while participating in STEM OPT, it may impact your work authorization.
 - Consult ISSS if you are considering beginning a new course of study or will seek to [transfer your SEVIS record](#) to another institution.



International Travel on STEM OPT

If you temporarily leave the U.S. while on STEM OPT, you must have proof of employment, or a job offer in your major field of study to re-enter.

- **Review the following handouts:**

- [International Travel FAQs for Students on OPT and STEM OPT](#)
- [Travel Handout: Re-entry from Travel Outside the U.S. & Printing Your Electronic I-94](#)
- [Visa Renewal Information for Students and Scholars](#)

Travel Considerations During STEM OPT:

- Absences **must be less than 5 months**. Absences over 5 months may result in denied re-entry, even with a valid job and EAD.
- **Do NOT travel if you have a pending change of status application**—it may be considered abandoned. Consult an immigration attorney for guidance.
- **Re-entry in a different visa status (e.g., B visa) will make you ineligible to work on STEM OPT**. You must re-enter in F-1 status.



Additional Travel Resources & Important Reminders

I-94 arrival record

Check your **I-94 arrival record** after each re-entry to ensure your information is correct (biographical details, Class of Admission: F-1, Admit Until Date: D/S).

Travel to Third-Country Destinations

- You may need a **transit visa** (for layovers) or a **tourist visa** for your final destination.
- Check visa requirements with the relevant country's embassy or consulate. ISSS does not provide visa advice for other countries.

Helpful Travel Resources

- [ICE Travel FAQ](#)
- [ISSS OPT Travel FAQ](#)
- [Visa Renewal](#)
- [Printing a Copy of Your I-94](#)



Eligibility for a second period of STEM OPT at a *higher* educational level

- If a student completes all course requirements for another qualifying STEM degree in the U.S. at a *higher* degree level than the first STEM qualifying degree, the student may apply for a second 24-month STEM OPT extension while in a valid period of standard post-completion OPT.
- A student may not be authorized for more than **two *lifetime*** STEM OPT extensions



Additional STEM OPT Resources

- [DHS STEM OPT Hub](#)
- [USCIS OPT Extension for STEM Students](#)
- [I-983 Training Plan for STEM OPT Students](#)
- [Form I-983 Training Plan Resources](#)
- [STEM OPT Reporting Requirements Handout](#)



Applying for STEM OPT can be a complicated process.

If you have questions after reviewing this presentation:

- Email your questions to isss@colorado.edu.
- Speak with an ISSS advisor during in-person or remote [ISSS Advising](#).

